

## Skiing the Brushes!!!

After reading the title of this article you may think this is about skiing glades or trees, well, it's not. It's about skiing little red-and-blue whisk broom-like brushes.

I am always itching to run some gates. But it seems that my only opportunity has been to "poach" a training course (and get yelled at) or paying for a NASTAR run. I love the NASTAR program but there are times I just want to run gates and get timed.

On a visit to Belleayre Mt. in New York's Catskill Mountains I found a "race course" of sorts that I could use without getting in trouble or paying, it was a 'Carving Course' featuring brush gates.

The Carving Course is the a terrific idea of John Jacobs from Reliable Racing, a racing supply company in Queensbury, NY.

"We wanted it different from 'racing'," John said. "The goal is effective carving, turning without sliding, and accelerating through the turn. The Carving Course teaches 'turn on demand skills' for skiers and snowboarders.

The basic concept has been around for a while. Reliable Racing developed "Coin-Op" racing in the 70's. Unlike the Carving Course, Coin-Op used break-a-way poles and many found them intimidating.

The Carving Course timing device is small and wireless allowing a course to be assembled in about 30 minutes.

So far two resorts have bought this "new" concept, Mt. Abram in Maine and Belleayre, and John is optimistic it will spread.

"Our goal is to have Carving Courses at every mountain. So far, interest has been

expressed by Okemo, Gore, Whiteface, and Wachusett."

One challenge is getting the word out.

"People have been chased out of training courses or paying for NASTAR their whole lives. Now we are telling them - come here, do this, it's free!" Jacobs said. "Best thing we can do is a sign that says 'FREE - welcome to your Carving Course!'"

If you want to improve your skiing or riding while having fun in the process, look for a Carving Course in the near future at your favorite ski resort. It'll be the best money you'll never spend. - *Neal Estano*

*Photography: Martin Griff*

